

# Trail Talk

*Conasauga Ranger District*

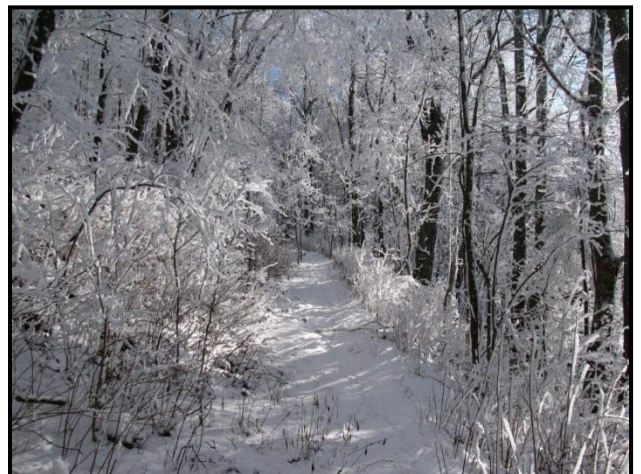
*October – November 2010*



*The world is moved along, not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of tiny pushes of each honest worker. ~Helen Keller*



Photos courtesy of Phil Woodward





**October 2010** - it's not a surprise that our top trail workers **Troy and Wanda Brown** got a running start to the month performing recon on the Pinhoti Trail section of Snake Creek to Dug Gap...BCHNG members **Jim Holland and Linda Pringle** hit the trails again making a loop crosscutting the blow downs on the Hemp Top Trail and a part of Jacks River Trail...SORBA member **Marcus Moore** spent several days out on the Pinhoti Trail doing various trail maintenance duties...**Junior Kyle, Lakota Towe, and Melinda Towe** representing BCHNG pitched in to help clean up Jacks River Fields Campground hauling off the trash and cleaning restrooms...always up-to-speed on the volunteer database, **Wanda Brown** did a fantastic job keeping all the facts and figures straight for the Conasauga District volunteer program...the four members of BCHNG who attended a "Save the Hemlocks" workshop were **Martha Fillingham, Susan Shedd, and Carlos and Carol Martel**...a pretty quiet month for volunteer activity still resulted in **73.5 hours**. A big thanks to those who came out and gave to the cause!



Working Weekend # 58—beautiful weather!



Crew from University of TN at Chattanooga

**November 2010** – the onset of the month brought SORBA member **Gennie Dasinger** out on the Pinhoti Trail to accomplish some much needed trail work by removing blow downs...**Justin Hurd and Terry Palmeri**, members of EMBA, also took to the Pinhoti Trail trimming along and removing debris from the trail for the upcoming mountain biking time trials...two more members of EMBA, **Andrew Gates and Jason Kepley**, worked on the Bear Creek Trail removing downed trees from the trail...**Gail Milner and Charlie Crider** struck out on their own for a couple of days to check the trail conditions and removed blow downs off the Iron Mtn. Trail with their horses...Working Weekend #58 saw a tremendous turnout as always from our volunteers who worked on a couple of trails over the course of two days...those who came out and participated in the needed work maintaining water bars on both Rice Camp and East Cowpen Trails, and blow down removal on Iron Mtn. Trail were **Troy and Wanda Brown, Amos Burrell, Charlie Crider, Jim Leatherwood, Gail Milner, Wayne Patillo, Russell Richards, David Tanner, Andrew Tillman, Doug Allen, Jim Bishop, Tom and Tannis Blackwell, Chuck Brock, Charles Goggins, Jeff Krivo, Tom Owens, Mark Voykovic** and a six-person outdoor group from **University of TN at Chattanooga**...trail maintenance that was not fully completed on Rice Camp Trail brought **Troy and Wanda Brown** out to finish up the water bars and blow downs on this popular trail...SORBA member **Marcus Moore** gave





Volunteers for Working Weekend # 58

time again this month to engage in some trail work on the Pinhoti Trail...finally, much-needed erosion control work in the form of rolling or drain dips was performed on a section of Bear Creek Trail with the handy Ditch Witch trail machine operated by both **Bill Hester and Larry Wheat**, making this part of the trail enjoyable for all the mountain bike riders...a magnificent **409.75** hours were registered for this very impressive month of volunteerism!! Goes to show we can always count on our volunteers to step up when it really matters! **THANKS TEAM!!**



Bill Hester, above and right, and Larry Wheat, top right, have spent several days working trails with the new Ditch Witch!





## Winter and Mountain Driving Tips

It seems as though Old Man Winter has settled in for another season in North Georgia. You might have already seen the mountaintops glistening with ice and snow. Some of you spend a considerable amount of time behind the wheel traveling to and from the national forest. At some point this winter, snow, ice, freezing and thawing conditions will give way for you to be more cautious of road conditions. Now is a good time to talk about safe winter driving practices.

- Always wear your seatbelt. It's the most important action you can take.
- Allow more time for the unexpected. Air temps can drop by as much as 10 to 15 degrees in the mountains. Clear, safe roadways at home can become hazardous at higher elevations.
- Slow down and watch for ice. You may encounter an icy patch around the bend of a curve or shady areas even several days after a snowfall. It doesn't take many vehicles traveling over the roadway before roads turn into a sheet of ice.
- The freezing and thawing of forest gravel roads can cause them to become very muddy, slick and even impassable at times unless you have a four-wheel drive vehicle. Deep ruts often occur during this time making it more treacherous for vehicle travel.
- Drive defensively. There is still a lot of vehicle traffic in the winter months. Stay on your side of the road and be aware that most people will be driving in the center of the road. Be particularly alert when rounding blind curves.
- Be prepared for winter conditions. Make sure you have the right gear in case you break down or become stranded. Always carry warm clothing, blankets, flashlights, cell phone, food, and water.
- Change plans if necessary. Conditions may be such that you have to turn around. Don't chance it! It's not worth the risk of an accident or possibly your life.



## National Trails Symposium-- Chattanooga, TN

Team Conasauga had a presence at the American Trails National Symposium, November 14-17, thanks to Drew McCarley. Drew displayed an updated picture board and handed out Team Conasauga business cards. A Washington Office representative was impressed with such an active and healthy volunteer program! The picture board will be on the wall in our office soon.



Drew McCarley and Terry Bowerman , Cherokee National Forest, at the American Trails Symposium, Chattanooga, TN

## Conasauga Bits and Pieces

- **Civil War Sites to be Inventoried.** Several sites known or believed to be associated with the Civil War are located on the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests. These sites have never been systematically addressed or inventoried. Recognizing the significance of these sites, and the potential complications of managing such resources, the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests are beginning to conduct an inventory and assessment of all suspected Civil War sites on the Forest. Active field work will be limited to the Conasauga Ranger District in the areas of Chestnut Mountain, Dug Gap, Maddox Gap, Snake Creek Gap and Mack White Gap.
- **Road Closures to Note.** Please remember the annual closure of Forest Service roads on the eastern part of the district that are affected by the freezing and thawing conditions of winter. Roads included are West Cowpen (FS 17) at the intersection with Mill Creek (FS 630), Potato Patch (FS 68) at Potato Patch Mountain, and Three Forks (FS 64) at Jacks River Fields campground. These gated roads effectively close the trailheads at Tearbitches, Chestnut Lead, Betty Gap, Three Forks, Pinhoti at Buddy Cove Gap, and Mountaintown Creek. While inconvenient, this protects forest visitors from being stranded and having to call for a tow truck, and also prevents severe damage to approximately 18 miles of road resources. These roads will close on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, and re-open on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010.
- **Congratulations to Ken Jones, 2010 State Trail Worker.** Ken received the award for the state of Tennessee, but many of you know Ken from the work he has done on the Conasauga District as well. "Ken Jones is a remarkable individual who has dedicated his retirement years to improving the trail system in the southeast Tennessee area. Ken has proven his ability to organize seemingly hopeless overwhelming projects and see them to fruition, bringing together many volunteers including hikers, horsemen, and motorcyclists working side by side. He has an incredible working relationship with the USFS personnel which results in positive answers to most of his proposals. Many, many people have benefited from his work." (American Trails)



"...I feel honored and humbled over the award. I told the story that if you ever find a turtle on the top of a fence post, you can bet money that he did not get there by himself. That is certainly the way in working with volunteers. Without a lot of help from everyone, it is hard to accomplish anything worthwhile."

Ken Jones, 2010 Tennessee State Trail Worker





## Mark Your Calendars...

- **January 15** Hickory Creek multi-use trail—water bar/drain dip maintenance, blow down removal. Equestrians needed.
- **February 18-19** Working Weekend #59, Iron Mountain multi-use trail—water bar/drain dip maintenance. Equestrians needed. Car Camping at Cottonwood Patch.
- **March 26** Rough Ridge multi-use trail—water bar maintenance. Equestrians needed.
- **April 23** Penitentiary Branch multi-use trail—water bar maintenance. Equestrians needed.
- **May 20-21** Working Weekend #60, Trail TBD
- **June 4** National Trails Day. Trail TBD



**Note:** In addition to these scheduled workdays, we are trying to find some volunteers who are interested in working independently or with a small group to tackle smaller projects.

If you are interested, please contact Ed at 706-695-6736 x 118 or e-mail [elang@fs.fed.us](mailto:elang@fs.fed.us).





We appreciate all you do as volunteers on the  
Conasauga Ranger District.

Merry Christmas  
And Happy New Year!

